FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

24 MARCH 1986

Iran-Iraq War

The Iraqi Air Force "completely destroyed" a large Iranian power station northeast of Ahvaz in a "surprise and devastating" raid 22 March, the Iraqi command claimed in a communique broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio. Iraqi planes also raided Khark Island and hit a "large maritime target" in the Gulf the following day, according to military statements carried by the radio. Meanwhile, tugs towed a blazing supertanker away from Khark Island after the vessel was set on fire in an Iraqi air raid 20 march, the *GULF DAILY NEWS* noted.

Iranian planes bombed Iraqi targets in the Al-'Amarah and Basra areas 22 march, according to IRNA, which cited an Iranian denial of Iraqi claims that two Iranian jets were downed over the southern front that day.

In ground battles, Iraqi communiques carried by Voice of the Masses claimed successes in the mountainous Panjwin area, asserting that the Iraqis defeated Iranian attempts to recapture a number of peaks recently seized by Iraqi troops.

In political developments, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz criticized a UN Security Council statement condemning Iraq for using chemical weapons against Iran as lacking "the required balance," charging that the Council's statement "ignores in an intolerable manner the Iranian invasion of Iraqi territory and the Iranian forces' repeated offensives" against Iraq. In a memorandum to the UN secretary general that was broadcast by Voice of the Masses, 'Aziz warned against "unjustified" and "dishonest" attempts to "focus on sub-issues stemming from the conflict" and he announced that while Iraq "has shown complete readiness" to cooperate with the Security Council, it "will not accept any efforts not dealing clearly with ending the war." In its reaction to the Security Council statement, the Iranian Foreign Ministry criticized the Council's failure to condemn Iraq sooner, charging that Iraq began using chemical weapons "nearly 3 years ago." The ministry statement broadcast by Tehran radio also called on the Security Council to go beyond a condemnation of Iraq and "take steps, using all resources, to punish the aggressor."

OPEC Affairs

OPEC ministers continued their week-long deliberations in Geneva 23 March on ways to bolster oil prices and achieve market "stability," OPECNA reported. In earlier reports, AFP cited the Iranian oil minister as saying that Iran would flood the market with oil if the meeting breaks up without an agreement on production, while the Libyan oil minister affirmed that the meeting would continue until an agreement is reached. The Kuwaiti oil minister also told AFP that the delegations were encountering difficulties in allotting individual countries' quotas within the production ceiling. In a related development, Libya and Saudi Arabia agreed to coordinate their efforts to "ensure a quick return to earlier oil prices," JANA reported, citing a 23 March telephone conversation between Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and King Fahd.

Libya

JANA ended the Libyan media silence over the latest U.S. maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra by citing a 24 March Beirut press editorial denouncing the exercises as part of a U.S. plan to impose Washington's will on the Arab world. Meanwhile, the Libyan Armed Forces commander in chief attended live ammunition exercises by Libyan military units, Voice of Greater Arab Homeland radio reported.

As for diplomatic contacts, a 24 March JANA report on a meeting between Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jallud and the Soviet ambassador noted that their talks focused on "the current international situation." In another development, Col al-Qadhdhafi received Algerian Prime Minister Abdelhamid Brahimi 23 march, JANA noted. Commenting on his visit to Libya in remarks reported by Algiers radio, Brahimi disclosed that Libya and Algeria have agreed to double the volume of trade exchange and he also stated that Algeria has agreed to supply Libya with natural gas.

Egypt

President Husni Mubarak received visiting Soviet delegation leader Pavel Gilashvili 24 March, MENA reported. Gilashvili, the deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, stated earlier that there will soon be an exchange of visits by senior officials of both countries, according to MENA.

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat also visited Cairo over the weekend, stating after a 23 March meeting with Mubarak that the current "dead end" in Mideast peace talks is due to U.S. "obstinacy," MENA reported. As for Egyptian-Israeli relations, Jerusalem radio disclosed that Israel will protest to Egypt over the content of an "inflammatory" anti-Israeli article in the Cairo paper *AL-JUMHURIYAH*. Meanwhile, Egyptian papers cited by MENA stated that Egyptian police have detained a large number of suspects in connection with the 19 March attack on four Israelis in Cairo. Nevertheless, sources close to the investigation revealed that the police have no firm leads in their hunt for the perpetrators, AFP reported.

Israel

Security forces have arrested a number of Fatah terrorist squads in Jerusalem and the West Bank, the IDF spokesman disclosed in a statement reported by Jerusalem radio 23 March. The gangs are believed to be responsible for a number of bomb attacks in Israel during 1985-86.

Sudan-Ethiopia

Ethiopia is "directly involved" in military operations in southern Sudan, conducting reconnaissance flights and providing logistical support for the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), Sudanese Defense Minister 'Uthman 'Abdallah said in an *AL SAHAFAH* interview reported by SUNA. Calling the Ethiopian support for the SPLA "a flagrant and deliberate violation," 'Abdallah warned that foreign interference in southern Sudan "will lead the entire region to a disaster."

In earlier developments, Sudan's National Alliance for National Salvation and the SPLA continued their meetings in Koka, Ethiopia 22 March, Addis Ababa radio reported. In a speech at the 21 March session that was broadcast by the clandestine SPLA radio, SPLA Commander in Chief John Garang wished the participants success, calling on them to reject "sectarianism" and work toward building "a new Sudan." But Garang also accused the Transitional Military Council (TMC) of adopting a series of resolutions aimed against the SPLA and he announced that under present conditions a cease-fire between the TMC and SPLA is "out of the question." Garang called the TMC's plans to hold national elections "ridiculous," maintaining that unless his group is involved in the preparations for elections it will not be bound by their "constitutionality."

In his speech at the 22 March session, National Alliance Chairman Khalid Yaji was optimistic that the meeting would result in a "definite determination to put an end to this bloodshed" between Sudanese factions, and he appealed to the SPLA to consider the meeting as a "unique opportunity" for the sides to achieve national unity.

DRA

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned President Reagan's "Afghanistan Day" message, claiming it was full of "fabrications, falsehoods, and the lunatic hostility" of the U.S. Administration against the DRA Government and people. The ministry statement broadcast by Kabul radio also accused the U.S. Administration of beginning a "qualitatively new phase in its anti-Afghan policy."

FBIS DAILY REPORT

South Asia

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Foreign Ministry on Reagan's Message
LD231739 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 23 Mar 86

["Announcement" by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on U.S. President Reagan's Afghanistan Day message, issued 21 March — read by announcer]

[Text] With the arrival of our people's traditional new year and the 8th spring of the April Revolution, U.S. President Ronald Reagan once again issued a message on the occasion of the so-called Afghanistan Day, a message full of fabrications, falsehood, and the lunatic hostility of his administration against the people of the DRA and the April Revolution.

Unleashing such an anti-Afghan hue and cry and creating self-made Afghanistan days by the rulers of the White House are not fresh acts. What, however, is prominent in Reagan's message this year is that the Reagan administration has begun a qualitatively new phase in its anti-Afghan policy. It seems now that the U.S. imperialists want not only to continue the undeclared bloody war against the DRA and intensify it, but, in pursuing its policy of neocolonialism, wants to try to undertake directly the leadership of the criminal operations of the Afghan counterrevolutionary bands.

Ronald Reagan who, on the surface speaks about peace and humanitarianism, has so far spent more than $1.5 billion on disrupting the peace and tranquility of our people and on carrying out the most dreadful inhuman actions in the DRA. Also, his government has allocated $470 million to continue and intensify his criminal war against our people during 1986. After all this, he allows himself to speak with complete impunity in the name of the people of Afghanistan.

There are also many hollow claims in the message of the U.S. President. Among these are that the Soviet Union is eliminating irrigation systems, agriculture, and live stock in Afghanistan and eradicating the Afghan culture, transforming it into a socialist country. These claims have no basis whatever. The fact is that the Soviet Union, by building dozens of public utility projects, irrigation dams, and canals, is rendering effective pratical assistance to the farmers of our country and is helping our government and people in maintaining schools and educational-cultural establishments. It makes efforts, by helping to implement the 5-year Socioeconomic Development Plan of the DRA, toward transforming our country into a prosperous and progressive society. On the contrary, it is the Reagan administration that, by arming and financing bandits and the Afghan coutnerrevolution, tries to destroy our schools and educational establishments and to paralyze the country's economy.

Unaware of the great changes and gains in various fields in the DRA, Ronald Reagan hypocritically claims freedom, independence, and right of self determination for our people. While the United States, utilizing its puppet regime in Islamabad, has transformed Pakistan into a nest for terrorists and murderers and from there negates the most fundamental human rights of our people — that is the right to live in peace on one hand and the freedom, independence, and national sovereignty of Afghanistan on the other hand.

Simultaneous with his interventionist and provocative message against the DRA, the U.S. President has stationed more than 5,000 7th Fleet seamen at Karachi port for a so-called rest. This manoeuver is in fact not only to create danger in the Gulf region but is also to threaten the people of Pakistan and the Pashtuns of the free tribal areas. It is the greatest manifestation of that country's policy of resorting to force and state terrorism.

In his hypocritical message Ronald Reagan speaks about the political solution and the withdrawal of the USSR forces from Afghanistan. He overlooks the fact that the DRA, during the recent visit by the UN secretary general's envoy to the region, handed him the timetable for the withdrawal of the USSR limited contingents in order to create movement in the process of the Geneva talks. Thus once again the DRA has proved its good intention, political will, and sincerity for a solution to the situation concerning Afghanistan.

It is the Washington administration, the militarist regime of Pakistan, and their other partners, on the contrary, who continue and intensify the bloody war, a variety of aggressions and interventions, and other hostile actions against the DRA and its international friends, thereby practically preventing a political solution to the situation.

The DRA Ministry of Foreign Affairs seriously condemns the hostile and completely ficticious message and the hostile statements by the U.S. President against the DRA and its sincere friend, the USSR. This is an open interference in the internal affairs of our country and a categorical violation of the recognized norms of international law. It expresses a strong protest against this interference and announces that our people and revolutionary state — more resolutely than ever before — are determined to continue along the path that they have chosen; the hue and cry and hostility of any imperialist state cannot prevent them.

BAKHTAR Issues Statement on Meese Visit to Pakistan
LD220741 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 21 Mar 86

[BAKHTAR statement]

[Text] According to the U.S. press, President Reagan has dispatched his special envoy, Attorney General Edwin Meese, to convey his messages to the Afghan counterrevolutionary bands in Pakistan, who, with U.S. backing have been embarking on savage actions in Afghanistan for several years now.

This new and hostile U.S. intervention regarding the DRA shows that the present Washington administration has decided to take another step aimed at intensifying events around Afghanistan.

Meese's hostile visit is new proof of the obvious fact that the United States not only does not want a political solution of the events around Afghanistan but intends to carry out direct intervention in our country's internal affairs within the framework of the imperialist forces' undeclared war against the people of Afghanistan.

Although spending hundreds of millions of dollars to organize military camps to train counterrevolutionary bands and arm them with most modern weapons on the DRA's border regions, Washington still is not satisfied. This explains the decision of the White House boss to establish direct links with the enemies of the Afghan people in order to revive the counterrevolutionaries' weakened psychological state.

The U.S. attorney general's present visit to the nest of the Afghan people's enemies is not the first visit by a high-ranking U.S. delegation. All facts show that the United States has undertaken the role of an organizer in the undeclared war against the DRA. This role conforms with the fragile feature of neocolonialism upon which basis the United States regards its interventions in the affairs of independent and lawful countries as legal. The visit by the U.S. attorney general with the Afghan counterrevolutionaries also bears witness to this.

This military (?plan) was earlier under the attention of the military reserve forces under the guidance of the intelligence department. [sentence as heard] His [not further identified] hostile antipeace and open war-mongering statement enjoys sad notoriety.

The U.S. public, which in view of its duties, should have adopted a stance promoting the safeguarding of legality and security, now behaves as an ally and adviser of terrorists. As has been announced in Washington, Meese is travelling to Pakistan for the purpose of so-called study of the causes behind the spread of narcotic substances in the world.

When the Pushtun tribes demanded to get rid of the camps and bases of the Afghan counterrevolutionaries from their regions, the Pakistani rulers under the false pretext of a so-called fight against narcotics, waged a bloody war against them.

The Ziaul Haq regime has employed every method to crush the Pushtuns resistance and has killed and tortured the innocent inhabitants. Meanwhile, Islamabad, in order to break the Pushtun tribes' unity and cohesion and to weaken their struggle for the realization of their legitimate and historic rights, has used, on Washington's instruction, the colonialists' old and rusty weapons — deception and corruption.

It is noticeable that the program of the visit of the high-ranking U.S. official to Pakistan includes a visit to Peshawar, the city where the centers and headquarters of the enemies of Afghanistan are located. The Pakistani rulers also launch invasions and attacks on the [word indistinct] and independent Pushtun tribes from that city. However, the Pushtun tribes have gained sufficient experience in the struggle against the colonialists and know their deceptive methods very well; they will not fall prey to their deception.

The Afghan people resolutely denounce the U.S. Administration's regular hostile actions. No conspiracy or threat can deflect them from the path for the construction of a new life which began 8 years ago following the victory of the April Revolution.

Pakistani Envoy Summoned To Protest Aggressions

LD241723 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] The charge d'affaires at the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul was summoned to the DRA Foreign Affairs Ministry today at 1430 and the following points were made to him by the head of the First Political Department: The relevant DRA authorities report that despite repeated protests by the DRA, the Pakistani military authorities are continuing their intervention and aggression against DRA territory. On 18 March 1986 at 1000 an aircraft belonging to the Pakistani Air Force intruded 8 km inside at an altitude of 2,000 m and stayed for 10 minutes in Guroko region, 60 km to east of Jalalabad on a reconnaissance flight.

The DRA Government condemns this provocative aggression by the Pakistani Government and protests against the military authorities of that country. It demands an end to such provocative actions which only aggravate the situation on the borders. Obviously the responsibility for such aggressions will rest with the Pakistani authorities.

Also the Pakistani authorities, in order to divert the attention of the people of Pakistan from the events and problems inside that coutnry, have claimed that on 12 March the DRA Armed Forces launched artillery fire at the (?Borchi) village to the southwest of (Parachunar) and on 14 March fired on Kharlachi village several times. It also claims that on 16 and 18 March three aircrafts from the DRA Armed Forces fired rockets at Khurum Agency.

After a thorough investigation, the DRA Government considers that this claim contains no truth and resolutely refutes it; it demands that the Pakistani authorities stop such fabrications.

Further Reportage on Elections Controversy

Ershad Offers New Concessions

BK211607 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] President Ershad has announced if the opposition parties take part in the parliamentary election and withdraw all antielection campaign, including hartal [strike] call tomorrow, then the elections will be held at an appropriate date before Ramadan. Addressing the nation over radio and television this evening, he said in such a case the election commission will announce new dates for filing nomination papers.

The ministers contesting the election will resign and the cabinet can be reshuffled. The posts and offices of the zonal martial law administrators, sub-zonal martial law administrators, and district martial law administrators, and martial law courts will be abolished. Anybody associated with the administration, including upazila [subdistrict] chairmen, will not use the official facilities for party and personal campaign.

The president hoped all political parties will respond favorably with a positive attitude being inspired in the ideals of democracy and greater political understanding.

If these measures are not accepted, President Ershad said all antielection programs and activities, direct or indirect, will be banned from 0500 tomorrow morning in the interest of public security, social peace, and holding the elections as scheduled next month in free, fair, and impartial way.

The president again said the people — and only the people — are the source of all powers but the only way to exercise this sovereign power is election. Our people did not commit any mistake at any critical juncture of history. He expressed his firm belief that the people of this country will give the right verdict this time as well.

President Ershad expressed the hope that all democratic political parties and organizations will come forward to take part in the national poll showing respect to our goodwill and sincerity and the democratic rights of the people.

The president reiterated that the elections will be free and fair and the administration will remain completely neutral in the poll. He said it is the moral duty of the government to take all measures so that the people could exercise their franchise freely and the candidates could go to the people without any fear.

He said the program of foiling elections cannot be considered as honest political activity.

The president said since he took over the responsibility of running the state 4 years ago, he had been working hard for national unity and establishing a democratic system in the country. That is why, the president said, he is trying to restore democracy and stability through an election participated by all, irrespective of their political ideals.

Awami League To Participate

BK220327 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] In Bangladesh, the main opposition Awami League-led 15-party alliance has decided to take part in the presidential [as heard] election unitedly. The decision follows President Ershad's announcement accepting some of the opposition demands.

In a broadcast to the nation over radio and television, General Ershad declared yesterday that if the opposition alliance agrees to participate and withdraw its antielection program by last night, the entire election program will be rescheduled. The election will be held before the beginning of Ramadan month.

He agreed to abolish military courts and all posts and offices of martial law administrators from zonal level upward. Ministers seeking election will resign. Nobody connected with the administration, including upazila [subdistrict] chairman, will be allowed to use government facilities for electioneering for any party or individual.

President Ershad also made it clear that he will carry out the assurances to the opposition alliance if they withdraw the antielection program, including the call for hartal [strike] today. Otherwise, he said, elections will be held as scheduled on the 26th of this month and also all antielection activities stand banned from this morning.

Our Dhaka correspondent Prabhakar Mishra reports that in the absence of any announcement by the opposition alliance to withdraw the hartal call, traffic in Dhaka city has remained off the road since this morning.

Jamiat-i-Islami To Participate

BK220927 Dhaka Overseas Service in Bengali
0635 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] In response to President Ershad's address to the nation last night, the 15-party alliance has announced its decision to take part in the forthcoming parliamentary election. Announcing the decision, chief of the 15-party alliance Sheikh Hasina Wajed said that the alliance will unitedly participate in the election.

Alliance Chief Sheikh Hasina Wajed, who is also the chief of the Awami League, expressed the hope that the government will immediately implement the measures announced by it and create a favorable climate for holding the election. Sheikh Hasina announced the decision of taking part in the election in the presence of other alliance leaders late last night.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Jamait-i-Islami has also declared its decision to participate in the forthcoming parliamentary election. The party in an announcement made last night in Dhaka hoped that a congenial atmosphere for the election will be created if the government sincerely fulfills its commitments. The party also said that some of the demands of the opposition parties have been met in President Ershad's address.

Elections Set for 7 May

NC221215 Paris AFP in English 1136 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Excerpts] Dhaka, March 22 (AFP) — The Bangladesh Government on Saturday postponed a forthcoming general election for two weeks, the Election Commission announced, shortly after the opposition dropped plans to boycott the polling.

The parliamentary elections were put back from April 27 to May 7 — in line with an opposition demand which the government had said it would meet if the opposition dropped its election boycott plans and cancelled a general strike it had called for Saturday.

The government also announced it would scrap all four offices of the zonal martial law administrators and nearly 150 martial law courts across the country — another concession it had undertaken to make if the opposition agreed to contest the elections.

The country's major opposition groups had said only hours before that they would after all take part in the elections, which they had previously said they would not contest while the country remained under martial law rule.

But the dawn-to-dusk general strike went ahead — partly because it was too late to call it off, and partly because the opposition wanted to maintain political pressure on the government, opposition sources said.

The sources said the strike had been observed "spontaneously and peacefully," apart from a few scattered clashes between pickets and police.

In Dhaka, businesses closed and vehicles stayed off the roads, although witnesses said some buses of the state-owned Road Transport Corp. had continued to ply their routes.

Armed policemen and paramilitary personnel stood guard at street corners and outside some government buildings.

The police said a group of unruly pickets had attacked a police post at Nilkhet near Dhaka University and wounded a policeman. Witnesses said the police had used tear gas to disperse stone-throwing pickets near Nilkhet and in and around the university campus.

Ershad Reshuffles Cabinet

HK241606 Hong Kong AFP in English 1605 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] Dhaka, March 24 (AFP) — Tens of thousands of opposition supporters took to the streets here today chanting anti-election slogans to mark four years of martial law, organisers said.

Meanwhile, military ruler Hussain Mohammad Ershad Monday reallocated cabinet portfolios after 27 politically-appointed ministers resigned Sunday, an official announcement said. The ministers had resigned to contest the forthcoming general election, after Lieutenant General Ershad had pledged to give his cabinet a more "neutral" look before the May polls in a package of concessions in response to opposition demands. The cabinet reshuffle left the president holding a number of major portfolios himself: defence, foreign affairs, information and establishment and cabinet affairs.

But it was still unclear Monday whether Lt Gen Ershad's concessions would persuade the entire opposition to take part in the polls.

Some 30,000 people joined a rally here organised by the seven-party opposition alliance to mark "National Black Day" commemorating martial law and chanted anti-election slogans, organisers said.

The alliance chief and leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Begum Khaleda Zia, told the rally that she felt her group could not take part in the forthcoming parliamentary polls under the present martial law regime. "We cannot go to the polls by betraying the cause of the people. We cannot go to the polls to legitimise an illegal military regime," she said. But she said that her party would decide whether to take part in the polls at a meeting party leaders, workers and representatives of different districts due to be held Thursday. She criticised some political groups and parties for deciding to take part in the elections following Mr. Ershad's concession offer, saying they were "creating a rift in the opposition unity and ignoring the interest of the people".

At a similar "National Black Day" rally organised by the 15-party opposition alliance, leaders of alliance members the Awami League and the pro-Moscow Communist Party said they had decided to take part in the elections as part of their movement against the military regime.

General elections have been scheduled and then called off at least three times here, as the opposition has consistently refused to participate in polls held under martial law.

Mr Ershad said Friday he was offering concessions on condition that the opposition agreed to take part in the elections, and warned that he would take a tough line if they refused. In addition to the cabinet reshuffle, he has announced the scrapping of martial law offices and courts and moved the election date back from April 26 to May 7.

The 38-member cabinet had contained 27 full ministers, two advisors, five ministers of state and four deputy ministers. The 27 full ministers' portfolios are now shared among nine ministers as 18 of them resigned. One advisor and one deputy minister also remain.

Rear Admiral Sultan Ahmed, deputy chief martial law administrator and chief of naval staff will now also be responsible for the ministries of communications, ports, shipping and inland water transport, irrigation, water development and flood control, and posts and telecommunications.

Air Vice Martial [as received] Sultan Mahmud, the deputy chief martial law administrator and chief of the Air Force is also in charge of the ministries of industry, commerce, jute and textiles.

Gandhi Discusses Pakistan Visit, Punjab Accord

BK220312 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Excerpt] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has urged the Pakistan Government to make earnest efforts to create a right atmosphere and strive toward normalization of relations between the two countries before inviting him there. Addressing a press conference in Baroda last night, Mr Gandhi said that the question of his proposed visit to Pakistan for improving relations between the two countries was still open.

Expressing his satisfaction at the progress of the drought relief works in Gujarat, Mr Gandhi said that with advancement in science a marked change has taken place even in rural areas. This, he said, has helped the people face scarcity.

Replying to a question, he said the center was going ahead with the implementation of the Punjab accord and was in touch with the state government in this matter.

Regarding the criticism of the government's economic policy, the prime minister said there has been no change in the basic policy spelled out last year. Earlier, on his arrival from Porbandar last night, he was received at the airport by the state revenue minister, Mr Harisinh Mahida, and the city mayor, Dr Jatin Modi.

Bhagat Criticizes U.S. Underground Nuclear Test

HK241538 Hong Kong AFP in English 1524 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] New Delhi, March 24 (AFP) — India on Monday criticised as "highly regrettable" the latest U.S. underground nuclear test.

Foreign Minister Baliram Bhagat said in a brief reference during a debate on his ministry's budgetary demands in Parliament that the U.S. Government should heed international public opinion and reconsider its policy on this crucial issue.

The underground test explosion was carried out in the Nevada desert Saturday.

'Official Sources' on Bhopal Gas Tragedy Settlement

BK241630 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] In the House some opposition members drew the speaker's attention to the reported out of court settlement between Union Carbide and the American lawyers representing the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy on the issue of compensation.

Meanwhile, official sources in New Delhi say that any settlement with Union Carbide regarding the Bhopal gas tragedy will have to be through an agreement with the government. The sources said today that it should also be an amount that will fully and fairly compensate all the victims of the tragedy. Any settlement at variance with this will not be acceptable to the Indian Government.

State Minister on Sri Lankan Tamil Problem, Pakistan

BK211319 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] The minister of state for external affairs, Mr K.R. Narayanan, has expressed the hope that the Sri Lanka Government would strive to find a political solution to the ethnic problem peacefully. Mr Narayanan was intervening during the discussions on the demands for grants of the External Affairs Ministry in the Lok Sabha today. He hoped that the people of Sri Lanka will exert themselves on the wisdom of the government to find a conciliatory settlement. Answering criticisms of members on India's role in the issue, the minister said we are acting with great restraint in the face of provocation. The matter is also being taken up with other nations. We do not want to trumpet about it, the minister said.

Referring to Pakistan, the minister said we are living with that country over the years and will continue to do so peacefully in the years ahead.

About the arms race he said it has been a dominant issue over the past 1 year. The call given by our prime minister along with five other world leaders represents a powerful yearning for peace. In all international forums our main aim has been to organise public opinion against the arms race.

Further Reportage on Unrest Incidents in Punjab

Situation Updated

BK220337 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] In Punjab, some minor incidents of violence were reported in Batala yesterday during the 2-hour relaxation in curfew. Some outsiders had put up blockades on the approaches to the town to disrupt the supply of milk and vegetables. They were, however, stopped by the police and paramilitary forces. An official spokesman said in Chandigarh this morning that efforts at political and social levels have been initiated to persuade these people to return to their homes. He said the police have also been instructed to remove these blockades so that the supply of essential commodities is immediately restored in the curfew-bound town.

In Jullundur, the curfew has been relaxed this morning from 0700 to 1000. Indefinite curfew continues in Nakodar and Muktsar towns.

In Amritsar, schools, colleges, Guru Nanak Dev University teaching departments, and other educational institutions will remain closed today. This decision was taken by the district administration as a precautionary measure in view of the call given by the All India Sikh Students Federation for observing black day today. The board and other scheduled examinations will however be held as per schedule.

Gandhi Rules Out 'Intervention' in Punjab

BK230719 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] The prime minister has ruled out any intervention by the center in Punjab at present. Mr Rajiv Gandhi was addressing a news conference in Ahmedabad last night at the end of his 3-day visit to the drought affected areas of Gujarat. Describing the situation in Punjab as very serious, he expressed the hope that the state government would take firm action to deal with the situation.

The prime minister reiterated that the scarcity situation in Gujarat is serious and it will have to be closely watched during the next few months till monsoon sets in. Mr Rajiv Gandhi expressed satisfaction over the measures taken by the state government to meet the situation. He promised more central aid to the state in addition to a 350-million-rupees assistance already announced by him on Friday. Mr Gandhi said that some deficiency in the implementation of relief measures were noticed at a few places. However, a special committee has been asked to review the situation.

He strongly refuted the allegation in some quarters about the center being pro-rich and said this is quite evident from the recent budget proposals which are more beneficial to the poor.

Referring to the situation in the subcontinent, the prime minister said that the security environment is not as good as India would like it to be. However, there is no danger to our security and we are firm enough to face any crisis, he added.

As regard to Sri Lanka situation, Mr Gandhi said confusion prevails about the nature of the solution to the problem desired by the Sri Lanka Government. He said the killings of the civilians there must stop. Mr Gandhi said India is not in favor of a military intervention in Sri Lanka to solve the ethnic issue.

When asked to comment on the controversial Muslim women's protection bill, Mr Rajiv Gandhi said his government was not working under pressure from any quarter, including the Muslim fundmentalists.

Three Killed in Batala

BK231601 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] In Punjab, three persons were killed and one injured when some unidentified persons attacked the occupants of a car near [word indistinct] barrier in Batala this afternoon. The assailants are reported to be from among the crowd who have been squatting on the road for the last few days to obstruct the free flow of essential supplies to the curfew-bound town of Batala. The victims were on their way from Amritsar to Batala when they were attacked. The car of the victims, which was also taken away by the killers, has since been found abandoned. The killers were also reported to have deprived the victims of some cash. The situation in Batala following the incident is tense but under control. Curfew was relaxed for 8 hours today from 0800 this morning.

According to an official spokesman, no untoward incident has been reported during the relaxation in Batala. He said essential commodities were supplied to the residents during the period. The district administration has been asked to take stern measures to disperse activists of the All India Sikh Students Federation and the Akali Dal led by Mr Joginder Singh who have been obstructing various approach roads to the town.

In Jullundur curfew was relaxed for 4 hours from 0700 this morning. The situation in the curfew bound towns of Nakodar and Muktsar has shown substantial improvement. But indefinite curfew continues as a precautionary measure.

2 Killed by Suspected Sikh Militants

HK240840 Hong Kong AFP in English 0833 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] New Delhi, March 24 (AFP) — Two persons were shot dead Monday by suspected Sikh militants in Batala town in Punjab state, raising the death toll in Sikh-related violence there to five during the past 24 hours, PRESS TRUST OF INDIA said.

The assailants, who arrived by motorcycle, escaped after the shoot-out in which Jagdish Ram, a telecommunications workers, and Gurdial Singh were killed, the agency said.

Telecommunications employees have condemned their colleague's murder and threatened to boycott work if adequate security was not provided, PTI added.

Suspected Sikh militants also killed three people and wounded one Sunday while they were travelling in a car from Amritsar to Batala, which has been under curfew for a week following Hindu-Sikh clashes, arson and looting.

Meanwhile, workers of the Punjab unit of Shiv Sena, a militant Hindu group, entered the curfew-bound town along with a truck load of essential commodities to be distributed among the people.

Sikh militants have been waging a frequently violent campaign for independence for the predominantly Sikh Punjab state, which is ruled by a moderate Sikh government.

80 Arrested in Batala

BK241608 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] Two persons were shot dead by some unidentified gunmen on the outskirts of Batala town this morning. Indefinite curfew in the town is continuing. Meanwhile, curfew in Muktsar was relaxed today for 4 hours.

According to the Punjab government spokesman, the situation in Batala has substantially improved by this evening. All those outsiders who have been obstructing the free flow of supply to the town have been dispersed.

The spokesman said about 80 persons have been arrested in this connection. Normal supply of essential commodities has been

restored. He said a 10-member committee of the state legislators has been constituted to study the situation and help restore normalcy and communal harmony in Batala. The committee is likely to visit Batala tomorrow.

Air Force Transport Plane Missing in Jammu, Kashmir

BK230712 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] An AN-32 transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force is missing in Jammu and Kashmir region since yesterday. The plane took off from Pathankot at about 0800 [0300 GMT] last morning [22 March] for a supply dropping mission and lost contact with the control tower within 25 minutes of its take off. The exact number of persons aboard the plane is yet to be ascertained. [Word indistinct] weather conditions prevailed in Jammu and Kashmir throughout the day yesterday.

A spokesman of the Jammu and Kashmir told All India Radio Jammu correspondent this morning that police search parties along with villagers have fanned out the interior areas of (Kiztwar) and (Zansar) subdistricts to locate the plane. Helicopters have also been pressed into service in the search operation.

Search Continues

BK240319 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] The search for the missing aircraft of the Indian Air Force continues for the 3d day today in Jammu and Kashmir. The ground search parties and helicopters are now combing a large hilly area, most of it is snowbound, for any traces of the AN-32 transport plane, which disappeared on Saturday morning while on a flight from Pathankot to Ladakh. The plane carried 19 persons, including 4 crew members.

Nagaland Ministers Submit Resignation Due to Violence

Tourism Minister Resigns

BK211336 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] In Nagaland, the minister of state for public relations and tourism, Mr Puse Zhotse, has resigned. In his resignation letter submitted to the chief minister, Mr S.C. Jamir, today Mr Puse Zhotse said that yesterday's unfortunate incidents at Kohima had compelled him to take this decision.

All shops and business establishments in Kohima remained closed to mourn the death of two persons killed in the police firing yesterday.

4 More Ministers Resign

BK231320 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] In Nagaland, four more ministers have submitted their resignations to the chief minister, Mr S.C. Jamir, today following last Tuesday's [18 March] police firing at Kohima. They include two cabinet ministers and two ministers of state. They are the finance minister, Mr T.A. Ngullie; the agriculture minister, Mr (W.K. Sena); the minister of state for relief, rehabiliation, and jails, Mr H.L. Singson; and the minister of state for printing and stationary, Mr C. Nocklem.

With this, three cabinet ministers and three ministers of state have resigned during the last 3 days.

The chief minister, Mr Jamir, told our Kohima correspondent that he has referred the resignations to the Congress-I high command.

Ziaul Haq Interviewed on Politics, Afghanistan, India

GF241522 Lahore JANG in Urdu 20 Mar 86 p 1, 7

["Exclusive" interview with President Ziaul Haq by *JANG* Washington correspondent Nayyar Zaidi, in Islamabad — date not given]

[Excerpt] [Zaidi] Mr President, civilian rule is passing through its 100th day following martial law. Over the past 8½ years you have been completely in charge of things. Do you not now feel somewhat uneasy?

[Ziaul Haq] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. No, Mr Zaidi, not at all. The 8 years during which we were completely in charge of things, we served the nation and the country using democratic and noble principles. Personally I am grateful to God Almighty that he has given me such character that I feel happy to participate. If I have only one piece of bread, I feel happy if I divide it with others, even if I can give them just two morsels. Thus you can see that even during martial law I worked to give others a chance to participate. Now that we have transfered complete authority to the elected government, I feel very peaceful and happy.

[Zaidi] There are rumors in the press that you may have some political differences with the prime minister or perhaps merely a clash of personalities. You have already spoken to the press on this question in forceful terms. Would you please say whether there really are any political differences or a personality conflict or whether these are nothing but rumors?

[Ziaul Haq] They are entirely rumors. Not only have I contradicted these rumors, but I have gone out of my way to support the government. We planted this sapling; how can we weaken its roots? The word difference suggests that we cannot continue with each other, that the program is not being carried out, and that we are trying to circumvent each other. If such a state of affairs could even be imagined, it would mean that we are uprooting our own sapling. How could this happen? I am sorry that in this case our press has not shown a responsible attitude.

[Zaidi] So far you have kept the office of Army chief of staff, which I believe is under the authority of the prime minister or the defense secretary. Why do you retain this job? Do you feel unsafe politically in the absence of this post?

[Ziaul Haq] Not at all. There is only one important reason for my continuing to hold the office of Army chief of staff. I do not mean that I would remain Army chief of staff throughout my life. This is not possible. The reason is that if you look into our country's political history you will see that the Army has often intervened in Pakistani politics, either in a responsible or an irresponsible way. The land forces of the Pakistan Army are more important and powerful. My effort, therefore, is to play the role of a bridge between the government and the Army during the present transitional period as the new government strengthens its roots. I do this to see that no such situation arises which we have already experienced. This is a small reason. Most responsible people feel this way. You must have seen that objections have certainly been raised on this, but not in the way people feel.

[Zaidi] On what will the future of democracy in Pakistan depend?

[Ziaul Haq] The people's idea of democracy is government of the people, for the people, by the people (if I have translated it correctly). The most important aspect is the responsibility of the people, but the people do not provide leadership able to come to power. This responsibility is taken by political leaders and the political parties. Therefore the responsibility to strengthen and stabilize democracy in Pakistan rests on the political parties and on their leaders. There should be a correct relation between the political parties and the learned people of the country. They should set their sights on the correct goals. If this happens, not only will we have a Western-type democracy, but my own ideas would also take shape. In other words, through a Western-type democracy there would appear in Pakistan a true Islamic democracy and thus we would turn Pakistan into a true Islamic republic.

[Zaidi] Just as you have said, you have planted this sapling of a civilian government. Is there then the possibility that if civilian rule is firmly founded, you would retire prior to 1990 or perhaps relinquish authority?

[Ziaul Haq] The idea of my remaining in power is not solely for the sake of remaining in power. People have elected me president for a 5-year term. If God gives me good health and life, I have no intention of giving up my responsibilities prior to 1990. Yes, it would be something else if God Almighty did not want it so. There are many things in life which cannot be predicted.

[Zaidi] Now we will talk a little about foreign affairs. The UN secretary general's personal envoy is presently here to conduct shuttle diplomacy between Kabul and Islamabad. Do you believe there is now even a hope for a political settlement of the Afghanistan issue?

[Ziaul Haq] Not only have we hope, even now, but we should see that the Afghanistan issue is not settled on the battlefield. Through the concerted efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister Junejo a political solution to the Afghanistan issue should be found. It should be found through the UN.

[Zaidi] There appear to be views that if Pakistan did not have such close relations with U.S. the Afghanistan question would have been resolved by now. What do you think about this?

[Ziaul Haq] Completely wrong. These are merely guesses. Pakistan-U.S. relations are one thing, the question of Afghanistan is something else. When the question of Afghanistan came into view, relations between the United States and Pakistan were somewhat strained. How then can one say that the delay in the settlement of the Afghanistan issue is due to the relations between Pakistan and the United States? The Afghanistan issue is entirely a creation of the Soviet Union. This question cannot be resolved unless and until there is cooperation from the Soviet side.

[Zaidi] You have visited India several times, but the Indian prime minister insists that as long as relations between the two countries are not improved to his satisfaction he would not visit Pakistan.

Is not such an attitude itself an impediment to improving relations between the two countries?

[Ziaul Haq] First I have an objection to this question because you say that our relations cannot improve unless he pays a visit to Pakistan. I would say this is completely wrong. No doubt there have been some such statements on the part of the Indian prime minister which would indicate that he may not be able to visit Pakistan on schedule, but there has been no such mention on the level of the Indian Government. Therefore, I remain hopeful that the visit will take place, as per the views of the Indian prime minister expressed to me during our meeting on 17 December. He stated that he would visit Pakistan during the first half of 1986. Of course we ourselves set a condition on this visit, that the smaller issues, such as bilateral relations, the Siachen Glacier, and the exchange of visits would be settled beforehand such that during the visit of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi it would appear that we had made sufficient progress and that we were about to reach a climax. This would suggest that all was due to the visit of Rajiv Gandhi. This way one could expect results. I hope that the existing problems between us can be settled through negotiations. Suppose he cannot visit Pakistan by next June, we have no objection to this. If he believes he would visit later, we have no objection to that either. We want him to come. It is very necessary concerning the relations between the two countries that not only on the level of the general public, but also on the government level, on the ministerial level, that relations should be good. Relations between the two countries could then soon be strengthened.

[Zaidi] One of the thorns in relations between Pakistan and India is the situation in Punjab. The Pakistan Government, as well as you personally, has assured India that Pakistan had no hand in the Punjab situation, but despite all of this, the accusing finger of the Indian Government and press is being pointed at Pakistan. Is it that they have no respect for your words or that they have some other proof?

[Ziaul Haq] I personally believe that India has no solid proof. They cannot have any proof because we are not involved in this situation. India has several of its own problems — in Punjab as well as in the south. It is because of this that India has to make such statements, to divert the attention of their people away from the real problems. As you know, Pakistan is in the process of signing an economic and military agreement with the United States. If the question of improving relations between India and Pakistan goes apace, India cannot put pressure on the United States. There can be but one reason for these accusations, so that Pakistan may not get a large amount of aid. Another reason may be that in view of the close relations between India and the Soviet Union, India cannot put force into its words to ask the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan, although India accepts in principle that the Soviet Union should withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. Moreover if India was to begin improving its relations with Pakistan in a hurry, the Soviet Union might become suspicious. It is in the background of such things that it is said that Pakistan is interfering in the internal affairs of India.

As far as Pakistan is concerned I can say with my own responsibility that over the past 8½ years our effort has been to stand solidly by our principles. If we do not want others to interfere in our internal affairs, how we can interfere in the domestic affairs of others. Therefore, Pakistan has never interfered in the internal affairs of India nor will it in the future.

[Zaidi] You have referred to the next U.S. aid program. May I ask you a related question? What expectations do you have for the next U.S. aid program? President Reagan has made assurances but what are your expectations concerning the total amount of aid in arms and cash?

[Ziaul Haq] I have strong hopes that Pakistan-U.S. relations will be strong and durable. More firmness will come into them. Their confidence with each other will grow. The next aid package will indicate the extent of strength in relations. The process of U.S. aid continues in a satisfactory manner. However, I would like to mention certain factors. One is the question of expectations. The United States has compulsions of its own these days, but we too have our own compulsions. First we should say that a political regime has been established in Pakistan. Although you see President Ziaul Haq as its leader, its head is now Prime Minister Junejo, who expects the United States to sign a bigger agreement with a civilian government than they had signed with a military regime. This should make a good impression on a democratic government particularly because the Americans always talk of democratic governments. Also prices have risen, therefore our aid should rise accordingly. The agreement that Pakistan had signed has caused a heavy load in repayment of the loan.

The question of Afghanistan remains at the same level. In view of these circumstances we expect the criterion of the present agreement to be greater than that of the previous one. Yes, of course, we can estimate how much. We will have our gauge and the United States will have its gauge. A compromise will have to be worked out between the two. In any case, I am most grateful for the importance assigned by President Reagan and his administration to our relations. We have had very pleasant relations over the past 6 years. When we signed an agreement with the United States in 1981, we had several problems before us.

A most serious political situation had arisen on our western borders. We had several problems within the country as well. It was therefore necessary for aid to be given to Pakistan. Under those circumstances we held talks for $3.2 billion in aid. I say that circumstances are now the same and that our aid should continue such that it may help to stabilize domestic affairs. That portion of the amount has also grown which we have to pay in the form of loan debts.

[Zaidi] Now I will repeat the question which greatly interests the American public. What about your atomic program? Even though you have responded to this question several times, I would like to know whether your stance is the same as in the past?

[Ziaul Haq] Our stance is the same. Pakistan needs atomic technology for peaceful purposes only. We do not want to become an atomic power.

Zia, Junejo Give National Day Speeches

Junejo on Eve of National Day

BK221652 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
1422 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo's address to the nation on the eve of Pakistan Day 23 March — live]

[Excerpt] Ladies and Gentlemen: It is essential to maintain an atmosphere of complete peace and tranquility for the execution of national development and reconstruction programs. Therefore, the government has decided to take every necessary step to maintain domestic peace and law and order. We will not allow activities in the country aimed at creating riots, disturbances, unrest, disorder, and lawlessness. For this purpose, the government has set up special forces to maintain law and order in various parts of the country. These forces have been given special training to control crimes. As I have stated, we will remove every obstacle — large or small — in the path of national development and stability.

Ladies and gentlemen, if any doubt or suspicion is expressed from any quarter regarding Pakistan's defense, territorial integrity, and protection of geographical frontiers, it is totally baseless. I wish to state categorically in this regard that I have confidence in our courageous people and brave forces. Our Armed Forces have the full professional skill and capability to perform their duties and to safeguard our frontiers. I would also like to make it clear that we will protect not only our geographical but also our ideological frontiers at all costs.

In the field of foreign strategy, my government's basic objective is to ensure the security of the nation and to cooperate with friendly countries for economic development. We want Pakistan to have an honorable position as an Islamic, democratic, and nonaligned country in the community of nations. It is our desire to play our fullest role not only in our national development but also in the peace and prosperity of the entire world.

The second main objective of our foreign policy is to promote bilateral cooperation and interaction with fraternal Islamic countries and to help achieve a peaceful settlement of various unfortunate disputes in the Islamic world. Support for the rights of the Palestinian people and the liberation of Jerusalem have always been the main objective of our foreign policy, and until and unless these objectives are realized, we will continue to provide our fullest support to them. We are committed to the principles of the Nonaligned Movement and now want to continue to be associated with this movement. In this regard, we want to maintain cordial and friendly relations with all countries of the world on the basis of bilateralism.

One more important aspect of our foreign policy is to eliminate the causes of disputes and conflicts in this region and to cooperate fully in the efforts to maintain peace. But in doing so, we keep in mind the fact that we will not become an ally of any superpower. Therefore, we are opposed to joining any military pacts.

As far as our foreign policy is concerned, the most important problem before us is to ensure the return of the millions of Afghan refugees to their homeland in honor and a peaceful, honorable, and political solution of the Afghanistan problem in accordance with the wishes of the Afghan people. We desire that the Afghanistan problem be solved as soon as possible in accordance with the UN resolutions and the recommendations of the Organization of Islamic Conference.

Our government is also trying to see that cordial and friendly relations on the basis of mutual respect and honor are established with our neighboring country, India. My government desires to settle all outstanding problems with India, including the Jammu and Kashmir issue, in accordance with the UN resolution and in the light of the Simla pact. I would like to make it clear at this point that the success of our peaceful desires and endeavors will depend on India's attitude.

I have recently visited Sweden and had the opportunity to meet certain world leaders there. I was very happy to note that the restoration of democracy in Pakistan is viewed with respect and that Pakistan's prestige has been enhanced, especially by the peaceful and constitutional transfer of power. The entire world is now looking toward Pakistan to see how it will strengthen the democratic process.

Ladies and gentlemen, 23 March is a memorable day in our national life, a day to reaffirm our pledge. I would request my countrymen to take a vow to work for the security, stability, and integrity of Pakistan; to consider this work as a national and moral duty; and to learn to think above their individual and group interests. As a head of an elected government, I assure you that every Pakistani citizen who has faith in Pakistan's ideology and national integrity is worthy of my respect. I welcome the cooperation of people of every class and outlook in the development and reconstruction of the country. If we want to lead a successful, honorable life and to stand in the ranks of developed nations, then we will have to work unitedly with sincerity and dedication, sinking our differences. I pray to God to grant us steadfastness in our determination and to bless us with success. Long live Pakistan!

Ziaul Haq at Celebration

BK231708 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Excerpt] The nation today celebrated Pakistan Day with a pledge to work with full enthusiasm and sincerity to protect its geographic and ideological frontiers. The day's programs began with the dignified joint parade of the three Armed Forces in Rawalpindi this morning. President General Mohammad Ziaul Haq inspected the parade. The president and Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo took the salute. Addressing the parade, the president urged the nation to pledge to spend every minute of its life to protect the country's freedom, solidarity, and development and not to evade any great sacrifice for this objective.

He said Pakistan's 90 million people will not tolerate anyone's harming the country, nor will they be led away from Islamic lines. The president said every Pakistani patriot sincerely wants the leadership of the country to enforce Islamic ideologies strictly and work for the betterment of the motherland. The president

stressed the need to maintain order and a peaceful political process to strengthen democratic institutions. Referring to the Armed Forces' pledge to the people to restore democracy, the president said that, since his announcement of the program on 12 August 1983, four elections have been held. As a result, democratic institutions have come into being, representative government has been established, and martial law has been lifted. He said that the success of this program appears in the leader of the elected government, Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo, and other representatives of the people present at today's functions.

The president said the Armed Forces are proud of the role they have played in protecting the geographic and ideological frontiers of the country in the face of internal disturbances and external aggression. They have made great sacrifices for this objective and are always ready to defend the country.

Referring to foreign policy, the president said we have tried to have peaceful, friendly relations with all nations, especially our neighboring countries.

On the Afghanistan problem, he said the people of Afghanistan have been fighting a war of independence for the past 6 years, and we pray for their success.

'Press Note' Issued on Jail Break in Sukkur

BK231556 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] A press note issued by the district magistrate of Sukkur says about 50 criminals attacked the central jail in the city at about 0130 [2030 GMT] this morning and overpowered two jail wardens on duty at tower No 5 after injuring them. After this, some of the criminals scaled the walls and entered the wards of the convicted prisoners, broke open the cells, and released many prisoners. Of these, 5 prisoners refused to go with the law breakers, but 35 prisoners succeeded in fleeing. The press note adds that during this time alarm bells were rung, and in the ensuing shooting, one of the prisoners was killed instantly while fleeing. Several wardens were injured, and the condition of the superintendent of the jail is serious. One retired jail official living nearby was also killed in the fighting with the criminals.

All the police and jail personnel in Sind were alerted, and several police parties are on the (?look out for) the escaped prisoners. An appeal has been made to the public for cooperation and information leading to the arrest of escaped prisoners and criminals.

Khomeyni, Hashemi-Rafsanjani Speak at Mosque

Khomeyni on War, Religion

LD241432 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 24 Mar 86

[26-minute speech delivered by Ayatollah Khomeyni, at ceremony marking the birth anniversary of Imam 'Ali in Tehran's Jamaran Mosque on 24 March — recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful. By the will of Allah, today, the loftiest occasion of the Shi'ite belief may be blessed for all Muslims, all Shi'ites of the world, and particularly our exalted nation.

We say that we are the Shi'ite followers of the holy commander of the faithful, may God's peace be upon him, and now, when the Shi'ite country is in danger, should we just sit aside and say: What do we have to do with all this? What should we do? We are sorry about what is happening to our young sons, we too are sorry; the holy commander of the faithful also was sorry about what would happen to the young, but did he sit at home and say: We are sorry? Or, did he go to war, participate in the fighting himself, as well as feel sorry for those who had become martyred? Now should we just sit aside and keep saying what should we do, what can be done, and these kinds of things that are being talked about. Issues concerning Islam include the issue of Muslims — what has happened now to our country, what has happened to Islam — the issue is not an issue [word indistinct] it is the issue of Islam, it is an issue of religious faith. All religions are now in danger.

The big powers had never felt that Islam could have such powers — that it could make this population of more than 40 million stand up against everyone and say: This is our country. Now they understand that this power is the power of Islam, and not the power of nationalism. It is the might of Islam which in their minds is placing the world in danger. Now they are drawing up and devising plots against the fundamentals of Islam. Should we sit and say that we are responsible for the guardianship [of Islam]? If you consider yourself responsible for the guardianship, why, when the country responsible for the guardianship is in danger, are you sitting down? Of course, this refers to a limited number who are not capable of safeguarding Islam anyway. Why do we neglect this matter? We (?declare) that we are the Shi'ite followers of the commander of the faithful. We should then look at what his holiness did for the good and interests of Islam.

At the time when he was the successor of the prophet of God, there were many people who would (?take vows) but would not go; even if they did go they would abstain from doing anything. The person who was ahead of everybody else was the holy commander of the faithful. After the death of the Prophet when, for a long time, the people were deprived of his presence, he was not just standing aside. He was cooperating and working for the preservation of the interests of Muslims; he would show endurance and not express anything or make a fuss, but would consult and discuss things with the responsible personalities of the day. He would issue guidance, and send his children to wage war. Now should we just sit and say that we are responsible for the guardianship? You are not even members of this earthly world, let alone guardians.

At the time when they pledged their allegiance to him, of course at the same time that [words indistinct], he told them to go to some other person, that these people are not worthy of the task. But then they exerted some pressure and pledged their allegiance to him. At that point too, the three wars that took place were wars waged against people who claimed allegiance to Islam, people who said (?they were Muslims). These wars were waged against Muslims. And now you are saying Muslims are going to war against Muslims. So you are even objecting to the holy commander of the faithful, who (?fought against the enemies of Islam).

A Muslim who wants to eliminate Islam is worse than the infidel. A Muslim who, in the name of Islam, wants to eliminate the prestige of Islam, is (?worse then) those who are not Muslims. You are raising the issue of Muslims fighting Muslims. The point is that this Ba'th Party believes that Islam is not the issue. Those who follow it, this is their goal. There is another group who are (?from our country), who come in order to annihilate the Islamic country and slap Islam in the face. Today it is incumbent on all of us to defend (?Islam). Everyone who can must assist on and behind the battlefronts. These people who talk about what we should do and so on are ignorant about Islam. They don't know what this involves.

We are at present engaged in defense; we are not fighting anyone. We are now defending. Al-Faw has become a center from which they were planning to embark upon an offensive and harm Islam. Well, we captured Al-Faw and defended ourselves. Moreover, to defend the Iraqi nation is to defend Islam; it is to defend Muslims.

If, God forbid, this Ba'th Party manages to win, which will never happen, will it have mercy on anyone? You who say that we should end this war, that this war is no good and that people are against this war, where have these people who oppose the war come from? Are these people other than our young men? These are the people who constitute our nation; they constitute the convoys of Karbala', they are the guardsmen, the Basij members, and other deprived strata who are defending you right now. And you are sitting by and weakening them. You say that perhaps God does not wish that. Do you mean to say that God does not agree with defense? Today we are talking about defense; it is not a question of going to war.

No one wishes to wage war; it never was the case anyway. We are reiterating the same statement about the war made by the Islamic Republic at the very beginning. Not a single word of it has changed. What we say is that as long as this 'Aflaqist party is in power we will continue the war. For in order to defend Islam, this tumor must be removed; this cancerous tumor must be removed, otherwise this country will never experience peace, neither our country nor Iraq, nor the Gulf states. These Gulf states do not realize what Saddam would do to them should he win. Right now, like a rat, he is making visits here and there, and he is intimidating them.

Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD241504 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Speech by Majlis speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani ceremony marking birth anniversary of Imam 'Ali at Tehran's Jamaran Mosque on 24 March — recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful; peace be upon God's prophet and the faithful. We offer congratulations on this holy day, the blessed anniversary of our first imam, to the great leader and the noble people of our country. This is an extremely important day for us. This day has always been important throughout history. During the era of the Islamic Republic and the rule of Islam, however, a different sort of attention must be paid to this day.

We are at the beginning of the new year, the year named by our combatants as the year of victory. Our status in the world today dictates that we must devote special attention to these days and to the coming months. We are living under special conditions. We claim to be following the path taken by that great man of history the most eminent pupil of the prophet, 'Ali ibn 'Ali Talib. Due to circumstances of that time, the government prevented that great man from achieving his Islamic and humane goals. Today the Muslim and deprived people of history are continuing his way. The leadership of this administration is in the hand of the son of that great imam. For the first time, under the imamate and guardianship ideology, history is witnessing such an administration.

God willing, under your guidance and leadership, the path adopted by Islam will end where God wishes, that is, victory of right and Islam. May today and this year be a blessed one for our nation and our imam. God bless you all.

Imam Khomeyni Meets With Martyrs' Families

LD211604 Tehran IRNA in English 1540 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA — Families of martyres, POW's and those missing in action from Tehran and Karaj met with the leader of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeyni at Jamaran Mosque on the first day of the new Iranian year, Friday.

During the meeting also attended by relatives of the martyres of the Iranian airliner downed by Iraqi planes on 20 February, imam's representative and head of the Shahid (martyr) Foundation Hojt ol-Eslam Mahdi Karrubi lauded devotion of the Muslim combatants at the war fronts.

Hoj. Karrubi also thanked the imam for receiving the families instead of country's officials who traditionally meet the founder of the Islamic Republic at the beginning of the new year.

At the end of the meeting Imam Khomeyni responded to the enthusiasm of the audience.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Conducts New Year Friday Prayers

Speaks on War Victories

LD211336 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] According to Central News Unit corespondents' reports from various parts of the country on new year's day today, millions of our Muslim compatriots participated in the religious-political Friday prayers ceremonies, chanted the slogan "War, War, Till Victory!", and prayed for the final victory of Islam's combatants over world arrogance and in this way demonstrated their unity.

Religious-political ceremonies were also held in Tehran with participation by the people under the imamate of Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani. The imam's representative to the Supreme Defense Council, expounding the positions of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the war, said: The war imposed by the Iraqi regime against Iran has now reached an extremely sensitive and important phase. Should the authorities — with the assistance of the armed and popular forces and all those who are acquainted with arms — follow through with the war, we will draw closer to the objectives which we have had for the past 5½ years. Just as the previous year was one of resistance and we were able to overcome our difficulties by our resistance, this year — God willing — will be one of victory!

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani then referred to the victories achieved during the "Val-Fajr-8" operations by saying: Al-Faw is not a small piece of land or a small triangular part of Iraqi soil; therein lies an immense issue. In Al-Faw the role of victory, the role of destroying all those capabilities and fortifications, and bringing the strongest Iraqi divisions to their knees, each one of these constituted a victory. However, the Al-Faw triangle constitutes something else in history and in the region.

Thanks to the deep canal we dug between Khawr 'Abdallah, Arvand River, and the part held by Iran, the area has now been transformed into an island. We have done such things there that henceforth a different reckoning should be reserved for that place. Since the war broke out near Basra and that harbor was closed down, the Iraqis have created a new waterway. After immense expenditure and dredging Khawr 'Abdallah, they turned Umm Qasr into an important and large harbor, but thanks to the victorious "Val-Fajr-8" operations all their efforts were nullified and the Umm Qasr and Al-Zubayr harbors became like the Basra and Al-Faw harbors. All these losses inflicted on Iraq and immediate ones and the problems connected with the sea will become clear in future. [sentence as heard]

In this connection, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: We have obtained extremely reliable intelligence from various sources and all speak of events taking place inside Iraq. The situation is extremely tense and only needs special moves to make it even more tense. The biggest question of the day is: How many more sacrifices must the state of Iraq make for Saddam and the Ba'th Party, and how much of Iraq's capital should be spent on a few people?

The speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly added: We feel that the position of both the superpowers and France, which formerly supported Iraq, has become shaky. However, two or three southern states in the Persian Gulf, whom we are addressing, still do not understand this. These people neither follow logic nor their interests. The question we would like to ask these people, which we have repeated but they have not answered, is: What is the motivation for the propaganda and financial support they are giving Iraq? If you are Muslims, then why are you engaging in racism? The ideology of the Iraqi regime is one of blasphemy; it is not Islamic. Why did you not condemn Iraq when it destroyed our country's cities and 1,200 villages, and committed agression up to 90 km deep inside our country's soil? Now that we have entered Iraq by a few kilometers you condemn us! It is obvious that this issue is one of racism. Right now Iranian Naft-e Shah is occupied by the Iraqis. What is the difference between Naft-e Shah and Al-Faw?! Naft-e Shah was a non-military city, but Al-Faw is military.

Addressing certain rulers of Arab countries, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: You should not fear the Islamic Republic of Iran. We are not threatening you for your past sins. But we suggest that you cooperate with us in order to extirpate the roots of this germ of corruption and liberate the Iraqi people from the iniquity of the Iraqi Ba'th regime and, if your heart truly bleeds for the Arabs, come and prevent the Iraqi nation, which is Arab, from being sacrificed for two or three people. You should adopt a stance of neutrality and allow us to liberate the Iraqi nation so that we can remain as good friends and neighbors cooperating together.

Discusses Support for Iraq

GF211340 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 21 Mar 86

["Text" of Arabic Friday sermon by 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Tehran Friday imam ad interim and Majlis speaker, at Tehran University on 21 March — recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Peace be on the prophet, his kin, and the pious people of God. Despite the misleading media campaign of the enemies of Islam, the "Val-Fajr-8" and 9 operations proved that Islam is stronger than everything else. With the defeat of the Iraqi Ba'thists, who have committed aggression against Islamic Iran with the backing of the malicious imperialist-Zionist-reactionary triangle and who have violated all international norms, the hopes of Muslims, the oppressed, and the chained people have risen for a better future that will inevitably come true. A number of international organizations have relatively corrected their stands, the UN secretary general announced for the first time that Iraq violated international law by using the chemical weapons; and other international powers, in accordance with their material goals, their interests, and to guarantee their future, have begun to reduce their support for the Ba'thists who are breathing their last breath. Despite all this, some reactionary countries in the region regretfully are continuing to stray from the right path and toward tyranny. These countries have defiled their honor and dignity by taking part in the war and the aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran. These countries fight Islam and Muslims through extremely ferocious national fanaticism and racism. Moreover, these countries regard our advice and our good intentions as a threat to them. It is strange that these countries consider our forces' entry into uninhabited Iraqi territory an aggression against Iraqi territories, while they did not consider the aggression of the Iraqi Ba'thists 5 years ago into the depths of Iran and the occupation of 10 cities and 1,100 civilian populated villages an aggressive act. They considered it a victory for the Arabs and called Saddam the Al-Qadisiyah hero.

What is more important is that the leaders of these countries know well that the tyrannical Ba'thist rulers of Iraq are occupying the important city of Naft-e Shah at this very hour. They do not, however, condemn such aggression and occupation. What is the difference between Al-Faw and Naft-e Shah, unless we say that racial fanaticism has blinded them and that the orders of their masters compel them to speak falsehoods, conceal the truth, and present contradictory initiatives? Or perhaps they have been filled with fear as a result of their crimes and sins. They imagine that their thrones will remain while the war continues and the Iraqi Ba'thists persist in power. They are wrong. These expectations and mistaken stands lead them to perpetrate other crimes, including their cooperation with Western powers which rob our oil wealth by reducing oil prices. These people sacrifice with utter effrontery the interests of the Islamic countries and their future generations in the service of the goals of colonialism and their masters.

If the claims of these people about defending Arabdom are sincere, they should have cooperated with us to save the Arab people in Iraq. They should not have made the Iraqi people, the resources of Iraq and other Arab countries, and their capabilities a scapegoat for the aggressive gang of Ba'thist disbelievers and the criminal Saddam.

Today, it has become clear to everyone that the only way to save the Iraqi people and the whole region is to eliminate Saddam. The persistence of the Ba'thists in power is the cause for the continuation of the war and the severe losses in lives and wealth.

We advise these countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, to desist from their deviation and obstinacy, and to return to the rightful path — to the rightful path, to God's path, and the peoples' interests.

I take refuge in God from the evil one. In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. When comes the help of God, and victory, and thou dost see the people enter God's religion in crowds, celebrate the praises of thy Lord, and pray for his forgiveness: for he is oft-returning in grace and mercy. [Koranic verse] Peace and the mercy of God upon you all.

Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on UN, Gulf War

LD221302 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, following a majority vote decision by the members of the UN Security Council to condemn the Iraqi regime for its deployment of chemical weapons during the imposed war, the minister of for-

eign affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran has issued the following statement:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Since the beginning of its savage aggression against the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iraqi regime has committed innumerable crimes, against which no reaction except silence, and unfortunately, in some cases, support of the criminal, has been seen from international bodies.

Naturally, the war would not have continue to this day if the United Nations and the Security Council had shown suitable sensitivity to each occurrance and dealt decisively with the aggressor at the beginning of the matter. The Iraqi regime has been deploying chemical weapons for nearly 3 years. Nobody doubts the dangers of such means for the global population. Has the Security Council gained anything but encouragement of the aggressor by remaining silent for more than 3 years? Undoubtedly, the spread and continued deployment of chemical weapons would have been halted if the esteemed UN secretary general had achieved condemnation 3 years ago.

The Security Council must not consider its duty fulfilled by the issuing of a statement and to have achieved condemnation by issuing a resolution. It must express its intolerance and take steps, using all resources, to punish the aggressor and to halt the war and the antihuman crimes.

Continuation of the war is the product of negligence and the overt and covert support of the aggressor and the criminal. The Security Council must not join voices with those countries who encourage the aggressor and encroacher — those who in principle are collaborators in this heinous crime against the nation of Iran.

The Islamic Republic has expressed gratitude for the efforts of the esteemed secretary general in condemning the Iraqi regime for its deployment of chemical weapons. This reminds us that the Iraqi regime is trying to spread the war within the region while the United States openly creates the atmosphere and the psychological grounds for such action in order to use it as a pretext for increasing its presence in the region.

We explicitly declare that neither the United States nor any other country of the world has a right to intervene and foment sedition in the region, under any circumstances. The security of the Persian Gulf, from our point of view, is totally a regional issue and must be safeguarded by the regional powers.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is the most vehement and mighty supporter and guardian of regional security and has no intention of spreading the conflict to other parts of the region. Undoubtedly, the complete neutrality of the regional countries in the imposed war is the best means of halting the spread of the war and crisis, as well as the most suitable framework for mutual steps toward safeguarding the security of the Persian Gulf and the neighboring countries.

Khamene'i Speaks on War, Oil, Achievements

GF230626 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] President Mr Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, who is visiting Mashhad, yesterday afternoon addressed a huge gathering of the Hezbollahi people of Mashhad and the pilgrims to the holy shrine of Imam Reza, peace be upon him. He spoke at the Imam Khomeyni Courtyard on the matters concerning the country and the world.

According to a report by a Central News Unit correspondent, Mr Khamene'i in one part of his address spoke on achievements of the Islamic revolution gained through the steadfastness of the Iranian nation. He said: Today our nation is being accepted as a great and respected nation, heroic in battle, and as a nation that has its heart in the Koran as compared to others, who lean on materialism. Today other nations are trying to emulate our nation and are following our footsteps. Today in Islamic countries the slogans that the people raise are in fact our slogans. Referring to the revival of Islam in other countries, the president said that today even leaders of certain Muslim countries, who have in fact no real or heartfelt connections with Islam, are forced by their own people and by the need to gain prestige before other people, are following Islam. This revival of Islam and its glory is indeed the product of our great revolution. Mr Khamene'i also said: During the past decades there has seldom been an occasion when a great industrial country like the United States had been reduced to so much debasement by another nation. Today, as you see, the United States has been debased by our revolution. France and Britain have also been debased and the countries who always considered other as their own property are today forced to reckon with our nation.

The president added: The system of the Islamic Republic, which depends on you people, is a decisive factor in international political circles. We are also a decisive factor in OPEC and in the Nonaligned Movement. At the United Nations as well, our envoys are being heard as representatives of a heroic and fighting nation. This is all due to the achievements of the Islamic revolution.

Referring to the war imposed on the Iranian nation Mr Khamene'i stressed: Now that the war has been imposed upon us we must use all our resources so that we are able to punish the aggressor and the enemy. We must pursue this goal with all we have until complete victory is achieved. We must continue our multisided presence at the battlefronts and we must continue to land blows on the invading enemy.

In referring to the statement issued by the UN Security Council, the president said: The UN Security Council for the first time has made a move, which — although not quite enough — to a certain extent conforms with the respect given the United Nations and the Security Council. However, this first move was not without shortcomings. The UN Security Council should have adopted a resolution against Iraq. The United Nations must condemn Iraq for its crime, the president said. He also said the states who have been proved to be helping Iraq must also be condemned by the United Nations. Only then will the nations of the world begin to have faith in the United Nations.

The president told the huge gathering of people of Mashhad and the pilgrims to the holy shrine of Imam Reza, peace be upon him, that the world power intrigues against OPEC and aims at bringing the Islamic Republic of Iran to its knees. He said: Our nation is too strong to bow its head to such intrigues and plots or to fall on its knees. Mr Khamene'i stressed this point by saying that we will continue our struggle until the real price of oil, that is, $28 per barrel, is restored. If they continue their meanness and plots we will force them to accept the rights of our nation and that of other such oppressed nations. We will take this right from the superpowers and their mercenaries.

Musavi, Rezai'e Give Speeches on New Year

Musavi Addresses Commanders

LD221158 Tehran IRNA in English 1152 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 22, IRNA — Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi reiterated here Saturday that the government gives top priority to the war effort and has mobilized all its means in support of Muslim combatants.

Speaking in a meeting with the commanders of Navy, Air and the Ground Forces, he expressed hope that the Army and the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) which have gained much experience over the past few years would make a strong armed force in the region and world to protect Islamic values and Muslims.

Congratulating the new year, the Joint Staff chief, Colonel Esma'il Sohrabi lauded the government's all-out support for the devoted efforts of Iranian Muslim forces in the war fronts.

The Joint Staff chief also hailed government's significant role in supplying the fronts.

Colonel Sayyad-Shirazi, Captain Mohammad Hoseyn Malek-zadegan, Colonel Hushang Sediq and Hojjat ol-Eslam Safae'i, head of the Army's politico-ideological department were present at the meeting.

The prime minister congratulated Iranian Armed Forces on the new year and wished them success and an ultimate victory in the Iraqi imposed war.

Rezai'e Sends Message to Nation

LD211744 Tehran IRNA in English 1610 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA — In his message to the nation on the occasion of the new Iranian year, commander of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) Mohsen Rezai'e wished victory and further success for the Iranian Muslim combatants in the new year.

In his telephone message from Khatam ol-Anbiya' headquarters and broadcast live on the Iranian television network late Thursday night, he said that real Iranian festival would begin after total disappointment of global arrogance in its plots against the Islamic revolution and Iran.

Khatam ol-Anbiya' is the joint headquarters of Iran's Army and the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps.

The IRGC commander said Iran's real festival would be the day when all Muslim Lebanese and Afghan freedom fighters had succeeded and Iran's homeless refugees returned to their war-stricken border towns.

IRGC Minister Rafiqdust Discusses War with Iraq

GF230839 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] Mr Mohsen Rafiqdust, minister of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps [IRGC], yesterday said that due to the bombardment by the sea and land forces of Islam, installations at the major military port of Umm Qasr, the major enemy naval base, are nearly totally destroyed. The IRGC minister explained the role of the logistical forces and their backing of the "Val-Fajr-8" operations and noted the sacrifices made by the personnel of the reconstruction crusade organization. He said that when at the beginning of the war the enemy crossed the Karun River, which is 100 meters at its deepest point, it was received with so much acclaim by the world press and especially by the superpowers' mass media that it seemed the Iraqis had performed a (?miracle). However, the Islamic forces did better; in a much shorter time than expected by military experts, they swiftly crossed the Arvand River, which has a depth between 550 and 600 meters, and smashed the Iraqi defensive wall in that region. The minister said it was the same Arvand River which nobody believed could be crossed easily. It was crossed by Iranians in the first 24 hours of the attack by the Islamic forces. It was crossed by more than 30,000 troops who also had all their equipment with them.

The IRGC minister spoke of the role of the Basij forces who, disguised as wayfarers of Karbala', were present in the "Val-Fajr-8." He said that they were among those who at midnight and the first moments of the attack crossed the Arvand River and took up positions. These were the heroic Basij personnel who made possible this victory for the Islamic revolution. I am confident that with such determination as shown by Basij personnel Karbala' will soon be liberated and the Islamic army will be able to move further on for the liberation of Jerusalem. The IRGC minister also explained the work by his ministry in providing support to the Islamic soldiers in the "Val-Fajr-8" operations, with logisticial aid and material and providing cover for operations, materials and transportation, and bridges for the soldiers to cross the Arvand River. Mr Rafiqdust referred to the empty claims of the Iraqi generals on their step-by-step recapture of the liberated areas in Al-Faw. He said: We have placed so many men and material in Al-Faw today that the Saddamist generals, who always talk of slowly recapturing the land, have also admitted that the recapture of Al-Faw was now nearly impossible. Today we have more than 10 bridges over the Arvand River for transporting men and materials. The enemy cannot reach them. We did not go to Al-Faw to capture and then retreat in haste. We have come to stay until we have liberated Iraq. We are here to stay.

The IRGC minister also spoke about the liberal use of chemical weapons by the Ba'thist enemy in the "Val-Fajr-8" operations aimed at disrupting the logistic support of the Islamic forces. According to these figures, he said, the weapons used comprised more than 1,000 bombs and 6,000 artillery shells. More than 8,000 liters of various chemical materials were used. This quantity of chemicals in itself is enough to contaminate an area twice the size of the liberated territory in the "Val-Fajr-8" operations. However, fortunately, the Islamic forces with the help of the proper defense measures provided by the (?nation) were able to blunt these (?morbid) attacks and continue their advance, strong and confident, in their objectives and positions.

Mr Rafiqdust also spoke about the dedication and sacrifice shown by physicians and medical corps who helped the Islamic forces in these operations. He spoke of figures involved in the complete "Val-Fajr-8" operations. Some 1,650 major operations were performed by the physicians attached to the IRGC Ministry. He said the IRGC health service, in a very short time, set up field hospital of 2,000 beds. The minister invited all physicians and others with physician's skills to continue selflessly serve the Islamic fighters on the fronts.

Mr Rafiqdust also noted the work of the naval arm of the IRGC in the "Val-Fajr-8" operations. He also noted the sacrifices of the Iranian Navy and the Air Force in giving wide support to the Islamic fighters in the operations. They sank several Iraqi warships and inflicted losses on several enemy naval bases, including the major Iraqi naval base in Umm Qasr. It was announced: Recently the Islamic fighters, with their artillery fire and a sizable naval (?bombardment), nearly destroyed this enemy base.

The IRGC minister in conclusion spoke of the plans for building an air force arm for the IRGC and said the budget had been already approved for it. He added that the air arm of the IRGC will soon be set up. It will begin service along with the land and naval arms of the IRGC.

Further on Visit of Syrian Foreign Minister

Meets With Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD211650 Tehran IRNA in English 1604 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA — Visiting Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' Thursday told the Majlis speaker, Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani that Syria has stood by the Islamic Republic of Iran and that it wished Iran a final victory in the Iraqi-imposed war.

Expressing pleasure the Syrian foreign minister emphasized on Syria's resistance in its fight against imperialism and Zionism. The Syrian foreign minister carrying a message for President 'Ali Khamene'i from his Syrian counterpart President Hafiz al-Asad arrived here Thursday.

The Majlis speaker expressed thanks for sincere attitudes of the Syrian leadership towards the Islamic Republic of Iran and lauded Syria's steadfastness against the Zionist regime.

In response to the warm greetings of President al-Asad and the Syrian leadership as well as their wish for Iran's continued success, the Majlis speaker expressed his mutual greetings. He reiterated that the Islamic Republic of Iran would stand by Syria in its fight with Zionism.

Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayatti and some officials from his ministry together with the Syrian ambassador to Tehran were present at the meeting.

Leaves Tehran; Velayati Comments

LD211152 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] According to our correspondent's report Faruq al-Shar', foreign minister and envoy of the president of Syria, who came to Tehran yesterday in order to deliver a message from Hafiz al-Asad to Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, left Tehran this morning. During his stay in Tehran the Syrian minister of foreign affairs met the president of the Republic, the speaker of the Majlis, and the prime minister.

When the Syrian minister of foreign affairs departed, our correspondent at Mehrabad Airport interviewed Mr Velayati, minister of foreign affairs, in connection with the visit of the Syrian minister of foreign affairs. In the interview Mr Velayati said: The reason for this visit was to deliver a message from Hafiz al-Asad to Mr Khamene'i, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and discuss with the authorities and responsible officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran. There are very close relations between Iran and Syria, the two countries are deemed among the determining factors in the extremely sensitive Middle East region, and complex problems and difficulties exist pertaining to Palestine and Lebanon, such as the presence of the superpowers. In view of these facts it is essential that we and our Syrian brothers hold joint consultations at short intervals to exchange views. It is also envisaged that, during the next few weeks, a session between Libya, Syria, and Iran should be held.

He added: The pivot of the talks between Faruq al-Shar' with Iranian officials in Tehran was connected with the important and sensitive problems of the Middle East, consultations and exchanges of views, and decisions on these problems.

Makes Statement on Visit

JN211152 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran — Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has left Tehran for Damascus following a brief visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran during which he conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i. Seeing Al-Shar' off at the airport were Iranian Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the Syrian ambassador in Tehran, and the embassy staff.

Replying to a question about the results of his visit, the minister

expressed deep satisfaction, pointing out that during this visit he conveyed a message from the president to the Iranian president and leadership. He said he met with Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani and held talks with Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi.

Al-Shar' said his talks with Iranian officials reaffirmed the firm and cordial relations between Syria and Iran in confronting imperialism and Zionism.

Reportage on Combat Operations in War With Iraq

Communique No 2416

LD211600 Tehran IRNA in English 1545 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA — Artillery and mortar fire of the Iranian combatants in western fronts being heavier in Nowsud and Naft-e Shah destroyed three group bunkers, two observation posts and two military vehicles of Iraqi forces, killing or wounding 20 Iraqi soldiers, according to a military communique here Friday.

The Communique Number 2416 of the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces says that Iranian artillery fire over installations of Darbandi Khan Dam as well as two Iraqi motorized columns inflicted losses on them.

The command says that exchange of fire between the Muslim combatants and Iraqi troops was heavier in Lulan, Panjwin and Sardasht as a result of which several group bunkers and observation posts of Iraqis were destroyed and some Ba'thists were killed or wounded.

Iranian forces dispatched more than 44 reconnaissance and patrol units to the strategically important areas in northwestern fronts, checking all infantry and engineering activities of Iraqi forces, the command says. The units returned to their bases safely.

In southern fronts, the command says, exchange of fire continued specially in Al-Faw, Hoseyniyeh and Talaiyeh, during which Iraqi forces suffered casualties and losses.

Movement of several Iraqi tanks in the area overlooking 'Nim Istgah 90' was subjected to Iranian fire, the communique says.

Bombing of Residential Areas Denied

LD221601 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 22, IRNA — A spokesman for the War Information Headquarters Saturday catagorically refuted Iraqi claims that Iranian planes had bombed residential areas in Maydan Province in Iraq.

The spokesman said that fighter bombers of the Islamic Republic pounded an economic center in Maydan Province, inflicting irrepairable damages on it.

The Iraqi regime had claimed that Iranian war planes had raided a residential area in the province.

"The Iraqi claim is a pure lie" the spokesman said, "the Ba'thist regime always makes such claims when Islamic combatants respond to its wickedness".

Jets Raid Iraqi Garrison

LD221617 Tehran IRNA in English 1615 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 22, IRNA — Iranian jet bombers raided an Iraqi military garrison in southern Iraq Saturday, inflicting heavy damages, reported the military operational Khatam ol-Anbiya' headquarters.

The planes bombed the Al-Bihar garrison in Province of Basra twice at 15:05 and 17:05 local time (11:35 and 13:35 GMT) the headquarters said.

Earlier in the day Iranian planes had bombed an economic center further north in Al-'Amarah.

The headquarters said heavy damages and casualties were inflicted on Iraqi forces stationed in the garrison. "The larger section of the garrison was destroyed. Smoke rising from the ruins covered the sky".

All planes were reported to have returned safely to their bases.

Iraq Bombs Ahvaz Suburbs

LD221645 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] Several aggressor Iraqi aircraft began bombing Ahvaz suburbs today at 1557, causing some damage.

Communique No 2417

LD221649 Tehran IRNA in English 1642 GMT 22 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 22, IRNA — Iranian jet fighters pounded an Iraqi iron plant in Al-'Amarah at 12:25 hours (8:55 GMT) Saturday inflicting considerable damages according to a military communique here.

The Communique Number 2417 of the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces said the plant was located on 31.15 north and 47.11 east coordinates. The planes returned safely to their bases.

Meanwhile exchange of fire between Iranian forces and Iraqis continued in northwestern fronts resulting in the silence of Iraqi artillery and casualties on their troops, said the command. Iraqi forces tried to take control of 'Sheykh Gaz Neshin' height but they failed due to the resistance of the Muslim combatants, the command said.

In western fronts, the communique said, Iranian Muslim forces bombarded industrial and economic installations near Naft Khaneh, inflicting casualties and losses on the Ba'thist forces.

All Iraqi engineering activities including movement of vehicle columns in Badrah and that of tanks as well as fortification building in Al-Sulaymaniyah were checked by the Muslim combatants, said the command.

Iranian anti-aircraft units forced Iraqi planes to flee from the air space of Abadan and Ahvaz in Khuzestan Province, although Iraqi sporadic artillery fire caused damages in Abadan.

Fighters Bomb Al-Bihar-Basra Road

LD231048 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] According to a report from Khatam ol-Anbiya' headquarters, the high-flyers of the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force heavily bombed enemy positions, bases, and concentration points along Al-Bihar-Basra Road in the "Val-Fajr-8" operational zone at 1140 this morning, using a number of fighter-bombers. They inflicted irreparable losses and damage.

Downing of F-5 Jets Denied

LD231440 Tehran IRNA in English 1425 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 23, IRNA — Spokesman for the information headquarters here Sunday denied Iraqi claims that two Iranian jet fighters have been downed over the southern Al-Faw peninsula.

The spokesman said Iraqi claims that its forces had downed two of Iran's F-5 jet planes Saturday was pure fabrication.

On Saturday fighters of the Islamic Republic raided an Iraqi economic center near Al-'Amarah and the Al-Bihar garrison near Basra.

Iraq usually makes claims about downing of planes after Iranian fighters raid its positions.

Planned Iraqi Advance Halted

LD231609 Tehran IRNA in English 1557 GMT 23 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 23, IRNA — Military forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran stopped Iraqi troops planning to advance in the northern sector of the 1,200 km war front, said the daily military communique here Sunday.

"The exchange of artillery fire continued resulting in casualties and damages to the enemy. The shelling halted all efforts of the enemy to advance in the Val-Fajr-9 operational region" it said.

The region refered to in the war communique is northeast of Iraq's provincial capital of Al-Sulaymaniyah where Iran launched its Val-Fajr-9 (Dawn-9) offensive 24 February.

Iraq first brushed off the offensive as an attempt to divert pressure from battle already underway in the southern war front but later announced counterattacks in the area.

According to the military command here all Iraqi efforts to recapture lost ground in the two fronts have failed.

The military communique also confirmed that an Iraqi war plane was shot down by Iranian forces near the city of Baneh of the northern war sector.

It said "smoke from the wreckage of the plane was seen rising from Iraqi soil".

Reporting on battle in the central sector also known as the western front the communique said confrontations were heavier near the three town of Sumar, Naft-e Shah and Qasr-e Shirin.

Near Sumar, Iran's combat-patrols "disarrayed enemy lines and destroyed several of their group bunkers killing over 50 troops of Saddam" it said.

The war communique is issued by the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces to give the final official account of war developments.

It said Iraqi planes violated the air space over the port city of Khorramshahr and the village of Mansurieh near Ahvaz in the southern Khuzestan Province.

While the planes failed to bomb the port because of intense anti-aircraft fire their rockets damaged four houses in the village, it said.

Communique No 2419

LD241528 Tehran IRNA in English 1510 GMT 24 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 24, IRNA — Iran's jet fighters bombarded a concentration center of Iraqi troops some 22 kms north of the Iraqi city of Al-'Amarah as well as a supply bridge of theirs some 30 kms northeast of the city, at 10:55 hours (07:25 hours GMT) Monday, said a military communique here Monday.

Communique Number 2419 of the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces said that the Iranian planes inflicted heavy casualties and losses on Iraqi forces and that all the bombers returned to their bases safely.

The Iraqi forces fired chemical shells at the city of Abadan and its surrounding areas at 04:00 hours (12:30 hours GMT) Monday, according to the communique.

The command said that the artillery fire of Iranian Muslim combatants on Iraq's oil installation in Banmil and Naft Khaneh inflicted irrepairable losses on them.

In the northwestern fronts, the communique said, the heavy surface-to-air fire of Iranian Islamic Forces halted transport operations of Iraqi helicopters in Panjwin operational region forcing them to flee.

Iranian Muslim combatants dispatched 30 patrol units to strategic and suspicious areas in the northwestern fronts where they engaged in intelligence gathering activities and inflicted consid-

erable casualties and damage on Iraqi forces, said the communique, adding that the Iranian patrols all returned to their bases safely.

Elsewhere the communique said, artillery fire of Iranian gendarmerie forces on Iraqi positions in Mehran operation region, destroyed several gun emplacements, observation posts and engineering vehicles of theirs.

Heavy exchange of artillery fire between Iranian Muslim troops and the Iraqi forces continued in Al-Faw and the Majnun Island with the Iranian fire preventing flights of enemy helicopters, according to the Joint Staff Command.

The communique said that Iranian forces opened fire on Iraqi armoured units carrying personnel in Hosayniyah and Yebis restricting or halting their activities.

The supply and transport operations of Iraqi armoured units in Mandali as well as movement of Iraqi tanks elsewhere in Halaleh and Kani-Sheykh were halted by Iranian artillery fire, the communique concluded.

Opposition's KEYHAN on Growing Narcotics Traffic

GF231421 London KEYHAN in Persian 6 Mar 86 p 6

[Editorial: "3-Wheeled Chariot of Death"]

[Text] Traffic in narcotic drugs in Iran gains momentum every day. The press in Tehran is full of drug discoveries. This is one side of the coin, but the coin has another side as well. The amount of drugs that reaches the final consumer, that is not counted among the drugs discoveries, has also achieved a new record. This can be estimated from the various reactions being observed in the Islamic Republic.

Ayatollah Montazeri has instructed the Islamic Revolution Committees to visit the borders, not to prevent the so-called antirevolution movement, but to close the routes being used to smuggle drugs from the neighboring countries, primarily Afghanistan. The Islamic Republic prosecutor general does not consider the narcotics danger less than that of the antirevolution danger because he believes that the drug danger is an "imperialist plot". (One should not be surprised by such a comment from Musavi Kho'iniha. We have also heard that the under secretary of the Soviet Ministry of Health considers the deathly disease "AIDS" a capitalist phenomenon — a disease which has risen from black Africa.)

Turbaned and unturbaned clergy warn in the Majlis that narcotics have affected society, particularly the young, as does leprosy. Ayatollah Khomeyni, during the shah's reign, issued a religious decree that drug trafficking was a most despised avocation, but punishment for such an avocation was not the death penalty. Nevertheless, the number of people who have been hanged in the Islamic Republic on charges of drug trafficking over the 7 years since the revolution has set a new record. This is most surprising because the more the campaign against drug trafficking gains momentum, the more the offenders are hanged.

These days we witness a deathly race of drug trafficking and use of the drugs against the execution of death merchants. It is now approximately 1½ years since the police chief of the Islamic Republic stated that the increase in the number of drug addicts was due to less activity in the universities as compared with the past; the youth have been deprived of sports. Unemployment among the young has also drawn them to addiction. These conclusions have affected everything except what it should have. The same was the result of a seminar held to campaign against narcotic drugs because it has hardly affected the policymakers of the regime.

The three wheels of the chariot are moving with utmost speed — the production and distribution of the narcotic drugs, the use of the drugs, and the execution of the persons who are apparently arrested on charges of trafficking in drugs.